

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor—such as the labor market, strikes, and industrial action, and contains other information of broad interest to the labor union movement.

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WILLIAM GREEN, President

WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MAY 4, 1943

GEORGE HEALY, Secretary-Treasurer

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## FACING THE FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

The War Labor Board is now settling on its last legs. It survives, whether it can save its usefulness, depends on some extent on whether the Government will continue to lean John L. Lewis by its aid. But, in the final analysis, the precarious position of the War Labor Board is the fault of John L. Lewis. It is the responsibility of its creator, President Roosevelt.

Long months ago President Roosevelt and his Economic Stabilization Director, Jimmy Byrnes, began undermining the power, prestige and authority of the War Labor Board. They held its power with decrees, they chained its power with legal formulas and, finally, they made it a completely helpless puppet.

Obviously, the big reason for this was to "stop" John L. Lewis. However, Lewis did not fall into the trap. He stepped right over the War Labor Board and refused to be intimidated by it. He did it knowing that its machinery was geared to kick him in the face.

It was not only Lewis who was not intimidated by the War Labor Board. He never has been. But we merely wish to point out again that the strategy of fear will always fail against Lewis. It is the responsibility of its creator, President Roosevelt.

A Bill of Background  
It is necessary here to go back for a moment to the beginnings of the War Labor Board. It was created, we remember, out of the no-strike pledge jointly entered into by organized labor and industry at the outset of the war. The President established the War Labor Board as a neutral agency for the purpose of settling all labor disputes without strike or lockouts in order to maintain uninterrupted production required by the war effort. It was set up as a tripartite body, equally representative of the public, of labor and of private industry.

During the first year of operation, the War Labor Board demonstrated its effectiveness. Strikes in war industries were reduced to a minimum. Production grew by leaps and bounds. The union and the employer elected their members into the WLB procedure. The WLB itself carried many economic injustices and it also firmly refused to make any concessions to unions which had violated the no-strike pledge and had shown themselves irresponsible. Thus the WLB established a reputation for fairness and impartiality, to the promise that workers who lived up to the rules of the game and disciplined themselves would be treated fairly.

When the President found it necessary to take stern measures to control inflation, including the stabilization of wages, the organized labor movement of America protested and requested the facts and went along with his program. This program permitted wage increases only to correct maladjustments between wages and living costs, to correct inequities and to equalize, to improve "standards of living and to aid in the effective prosecution of the war."

The Fatal Blow  
But the moment John L. Lewis soured off with his demands for a \$2 a day wage increase, he was charged with the responsibility of changing the rules of the game. The public members of the WLB were warned not to grant any wage increase until the Federal Government had previously an attempt was being made to build up a backlog of precedents with which to justify a denial of Lewis' demands. Finally, the President shut down the Board against Lewis. Order which struck Lewis was the WLB of practically all of its powers to approve wage increases.

Thus the WLB was left with no power to correct inequities and no, whether it can recover. Certainly, if Lewis is permitted to circumvent the Board the workers of the war industries will be left in a precarious position.

The Board recognizes its vulnerability. In certifying the coal miners' case to the President for action, after Lewis refused to have anything to do with its fact-finding investigation, the Board stated that it was "in a precarious position" by every American worker. The statement may turn out to be the swan song of the WLB. Nevertheless, it was a cogent expression of the principles upon which the agency was founded—principles which will continue to be sound and unshakable so long as the Government is committed to the war effort. The Board is not a law. It is a committee. It is not a court. It is not a tribunal. It is not a body which can make laws. It is not a body which can make laws. It is not a body which can make laws.

## AFL Shipyard Workers Honored For Ideas Improving Production

Washington, D. C.—Members of Drive Headquarters is now filling requests for data on suggestions at a national level. The drive is being carried out by the American Federation of Labor unions employed in the nation's shipyards. It is the first time that such a drive has been organized by the AFL. The drive is being carried out by the American Federation of Labor unions employed in the nation's shipyards. It is the first time that such a drive has been organized by the AFL.

The suggestions accomplished proper short-cuts and clearly indicated, according to the Drive Headquarters, that shipyard workers are not going to accept an increase of U-boat sinking in our victory. They are going to accept an increase of U-boat sinking in our victory. They are going to accept an increase of U-boat sinking in our victory.

"Hitherto, by surpassing all other industries in point of number of suggestions actually put into operation and response to drive headquarters, shipyard workers have been the first to do so. Their suggestions are being accepted as a result of production shortfalls, material savings and safety procedures they themselves have suggested through shipyard joint production committees."

All suggestions which receive national honors are placed back into industry, so that improvements in building developed and put into practice in one yard are made available to all yards. War production methods and speed up output.

## Morris C. Feinstein Dies at 64; United Hebrew Trades Official

New York City.—Morris C. Feinstein, secretary-treasurer of the United Hebrew Trades, died of a heart attack at his home in the Park Central Hotel. He was 64 years old. He was a member of the board of directors of the United Hebrew Trades. He was a member of the board of directors of the United Hebrew Trades.

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## Green Directs Unions in States To Fight Recent Anti-Labor Laws

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green directed State Federations of Labor and city central bodies in Texas, Arkansas, South Dakota, Idaho, Kansas and Colorado to refrain from complying with recently enacted anti-labor legislation in these States on the ground that the laws "violate both State and Federal Constitutions."

Mr. Green revealed that he has received a legal opinion to this effect from Joseph A. Padway, counsel for the AFL.

The AFL, Mr. Green declared in a circular letter, has no intention of refusing to comply with valid laws. It is convinced that compliance with the unconstitutional measures will disrupt normal labor relations and impose serious injury upon the labor movement.

Therefore, the AFL is determined to resist these new measures and challenge their constitutionality in the courts, Mr. Green said.

He advised the State Federations and central bodies to communicate at once with Judge Padway, who will be paid to instruct them how to proceed.

"Let us attack the validity of these anti-labor statutes in this spirit of cooperation and exhaust every legal right which may be accorded us in the fight we must necessarily make against the constitutionality of said legislation," Mr. Green said.

## J. P. Coyne, Building Trades Chief, Dies After Protracted Illness

Washington, D. C.—John P. Coyne, president of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, died at his home here after an extended illness.

Formerly an official of the International Union of Operating Engineers, Mr. Coyne was elected head of the Building and Construction Trades Department in 1939.

His first act as president was to set up procedures for the elimination of strikes due to jurisdictional disputes. Mr. Coyne then turned his attention to the problem of the construction industry.

After a brief leave of absence, Mr. Coyne returned to his duties and, following the outbreak of the war, succeeded in negotiating a national wage agreement between the Building Trades and the construction industry. Under this pact, thousands of new war factories were built as the result of his efforts.

Mr. Coyne's services were highly appreciated by the leaders of the construction industry. He was elected chairman of the Building Trades Department in 1939. He was elected chairman of the Building Trades Department in 1939.

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## Edges Over Pledges After Labor Hits Failure To Act

### Truce Ends Coal Mine Strike

Washington, D. C.—The short-lived coal mine strike ended Tuesday with a radio address in which he generally scolded the officials of the United Mine Workers Union for its inactivity.

The President designated Secretary of the Interior to take charge of the operation of the coal mines immediately after the Lewis strike ended. He ordered his men back to work.

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**WE PLEDGE—**

**1 BILLION DOLLARS**

**FOR VICTORY**

## OPA Advisory Committee Assails Price Boom While Wages Are Frozen

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt and OPA Administrator Prentiss Brown met Tuesday in radio address to call back executives, labor and industry to the operation of the coal mines immediately after the Lewis strike ended.

Despite these promises from those in high places, the wages paid continued to soar during the week with the price of a few staple foods going up by as much as 10 percent.

Abandonment by OPA of grade-leveling constituted another repudiation of the government's good faith in protecting the American people against price inflation accompanied by higher prices.

Later, when it attacked the Government's failure to hold the line on food prices took the form of a declaration.

## MEANT TO DISCUSS FORMS ON LABOR FOR VICTORY

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